

DANVILLE — Mrs. Eileen Hanson today termed as "rank injustice" charges that she beat or neglected residents of the boarding school she operates for mentally retarded children.

She denied the accusations and said they came "out of the blue."

Mrs. Hanson has received a temporary restraining order to prevent the Contra Costa County juvenile control officer from interfering in the operation of the home.

FREE ON BAIL

The 53-year-old woman, who owns and operates Stagg Manor School on Kelly Lane, was arrested yesterday on two misdemeanor charges. Trial was set for June 6. She is free on bail.

Beside the criminal charges, she faces accusations by the State Department of Mental Hygiene that she beat some of her youthful wards with leather straps and broom handles and punished some by putting them in tubs of cold water.

The department, which licensed Mrs. Hanson 2½ years ago, is seeking to revoke her license. She has 15 days to seek a hearing on the action.

'WILL REFUTE ALL'

Her attorney, Thomas McBride, said, "In time, we will refute all of the allegations."

He added, "Mrs. Hanson is entitled to far better treatment than she has received at the hands of public authorities . . . We would have appreciated it if (they) . . . would have given Mrs. Hanson the courtesy of the ordinary principles of American justice, . . . an opportunity to face her accusers before any action was taken."

APRIL 2 HEARING

After Mrs. Hanson's arrest, McBride filed for the injunction against Florence Drummond, the county juvenile control officer.

Superior Judge Homer Patterson granted a temporary restraining order and set April 2 for a hearing.

Mrs. Hanson had charged Mrs. Drummond with advising parents to take their children out of Stagg Manor.

Child Home Beatings Charged

TRF MAR 27 1962

Woman Accused Of Cruelty While Housing Retarded

DANVILLE — Charges of neglect and abuse were filed today against the owner of a boarding house and school for mentally retarded children. The state previously had accused her of cruelty.

The action climaxes five weeks of investigation initiated on the complaints of parents in Contra Costa and Santa Clara counties whose children have been residents at the Stagg Manos School for Retarded Children on Kelly Lane.

Named in both actions is Mrs. Eileen M. Hanson, owner-operator of the home since October, 1959.

REVOCATION

The State Department of Mental Hygiene, which licensed Mrs. Hanson in the first place to operate Stagg Manor, moved last Thursday for the revocation of that license.

John Barr, program consultant for the department, said the state accuses Mrs. Hanson of beating some of her young charges with leather straps and broom handles and of further punishing them by putting them in tubs of cold water and tying them to trees.

Three dates were cited in the accusations: Jan. 25, Feb. 7 and Feb. 25.

Mrs. Hanson has 15 days from last Thursday to request a hearing on the charges.

The two counts of neglect and cruelty, each naming 10 children between 9 and 16, are contained in complaints signed last night by Sheriff's Lt. Norman F. Wilson.

A warrant for Mrs. Hanson's arrest, plus a search warrant of the home itself, was signed and issued by Judge Betsy FitzGerald Rahn of the Walnut Creek Municipal Court.

ADULTS IN HOME

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The District Attorney's office said there are seven children plus four adults, all mentally deficient, in the home now, although Stagg Manor is licensed only for the residential care of mentally-retarded children.

The complaints allege that the listed acts of neglect and abuse took place within a one-year period ending yesterday.

Lt. Wilson, head of the sheriff's Juvenile Division, led the investigation and was assisted by Mrs. Florence Drummond, juvenile control officer for the county, and others.

Newton Holcomb, Santa Clara County welfare director, said the county had four boys in the home, one of whom had been there since 1953, but took them all out last month on the basis of investigation started when parents complained.

Santa Clara County investigators, according to Holcomb, "raised questions of nutrition, medical care, methods of punishment and general physical conditions of the home."

Holcomb notified Contra Costa County authorities of his findings, wrote to the State Department of Social Welfare and asked the State Department of Mental Hygiene to review Mrs. Hanson's license.

Simultaneously, Contra

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Costa County began receiving complaints from parents on the operation of the home and began its own investigation.

The State Department of Mental Hygiene filed accusations against Mrs. Hanson through the State Attorney General's Office on the basis of the two-county investigation and an independent probe.

Mrs. Hanson is licensed to care for a maximum of 24 juveniles and takes children from all over the state. Some were placed by parents and others by the Mental Hygiene Dept.

The Contra Costa County complaints filed against Mrs. Hanson are both misdemeanors. Total bail is \$1,365.

Court Rules Injunction To Stay

IR D APR 10 1962

MARTINEZ—A temporary restraining order issued March 27 to prevent Juvenile Control Officer Florence Drummond from interfering with the operation of Stagg Manor School for the Mentally Retarded in Danville was continued indefinitely yesterday.

Contra Costa County Superior Judge Hugh H. Donovan heard testimony that Mrs. Drummond had called at least three parents advising them to take their children out of the school.

He ruled that the injunction, sought by Mrs. Eileen Hanson, owner of the school, will stay in effect until after briefs requesting a permanent injunction and damages in an unspecified amount are submitted.

Mrs. Hanson, 53, faces trial June 6 in Walnut Creek Municipal Court of misdemeanor charges of mistreating some of the students at the school. In addition, The State Department of Mental Hygiene seeks to revoke her license to operate the school.

Defendant Pleads Innocent In Stagg School Abuse Case

TR D JUN 1 - 1962

WALNUT CREEK — Ronald Lee Hicks, named as a second defendant in charges concerning alleged mistreatment of young students at the Stagg Manor School for Retarded in Danville, pleaded innocent at his arraignment in Walnut Creek Municipal Court this morning.

Hicks, 25, and his mother-in-law, Mrs. Eileen Hanson, who was named in the original charges, both appeared in court this morning with

their attorney Thomas F. McBride to hear reading of an amended complaint. Mrs. Hanson also has pleaded innocent.

Dep. Dist. Atty. William Higham said two more children have been added to the complaint which charges the defendants with neglect and abuse of several of their students.

A jury trial on the charge will begin Wednesday morning in Walnut Creek Municipal Court.

Abuse Case

Has New

TR D MAY 31 1962

Defendant

WALNUT CREEK — Ronnie Hicks today was named as a defendant in the alleged mistreatment of young students at Mrs. Eileen Hanson's Stagg Manor School for the Mentally Retarded at Danville.

Hicks is to be arraigned on the complaint issued by the district attorney's office tomorrow at 9 a.m. in Walnut Creek Municipal Court.

Mrs. Hanson, Hick's mother-in-law, was arrested on March 27 on charges of neglecting and abusing children in the home, following an investigation by county and state authorities. She has pleaded innocent to the accusations and faces trial Wednesday in the Walnut Creek court.

The decision to also charge Hicks, said Deputy Dist. Atty. William Higham, followed further investigation by the district attorney's office.

Quit Interference, Sheriff's Aide Told

TR D AUG 2 - 1962

MARTINEZ — A Contra Costa Sheriff's juvenile control officer has been legally restrained from inducing parents to remove their children from a boarding school whose owner is accused of beating and neglecting inmates.

Superior Judge Hugh H. Donovan issued the injunction against Mrs. Florence Drummond who was charged by Mrs. Eileen Hanson of causing the withdrawal of 18 children from Stagg Manor School for the Mentally Retarded since Jan. 1.

Mrs. Hanson is scheduled to go to trial in Walnut Creek Municipal Court Sept. 5 for neglecting and abusing children in the Danville boarding school.

Donovan said Mrs. Drummond "should refrain from doing any act injurious to the plaintiff's (Mrs. Hanson) business until such judicial determination is made."

He said trying to induce parents to withdraw their children is outside the scope of her authority.

The defendant had available to her legal remedies,

if the welfare of the inmates were in immediate peril," Donovan said.

Mrs. Drummond was instrumental in bringing charges against Mrs. Hanson after five weeks of intensive investigation initiated on the complaints of parents in Contra Costa and Santa Clara Counties.

Stagg Manor Hearing Set In Martinez

TR D JUN 5 - 1962

MARTINEZ — Mrs. Eileen Hanson, accused of mistreating children at her ~~Stagg Manor School for the Mentally Retarded~~ at Danville, fights to save her state boarding home license at a public hearing June 28-29 in the Hall of Records.

Revocation will be recommended by the State Department of Mental Hygiene to Jerome Herst, hearing officer assigned by the Division of Administrative Procedure.

The department moved for the license forfeiture in March, after accusing Mrs. Hanson of cruelty toward some of her youthful charges.

Mrs. Hanson denied the charges and demanded the hearing on the state's charges.

Likewise, she and her son-in-law, Ronald Hicks, have denied neglect and abuse charges filed by Contra Costa County and will be tried on them by a jury in Walnut Creek Municipal Court Sept. 5.

Jury Finds

Hanson

Guilty

TR D. OCT 12 1962

WALNUT CREEK — Mrs. Eileen Hanson and her son-in-law, Ronald Hicks, were convicted yesterday of mistreating mentally retarded children in her Stagg Manor boarding home at Danville.

After 16 days of trial, the jury of eight women and four men deliberated five hours before returning with their findings against the pair.

Mrs. Hanson was found guilty on two counts of neglect and mistreatment of children in her charge, and Hicks on one count of mistreatment.

Ironically, the verdict came on the very day Mrs. Hick's marked her 54th birthday.

She will be sentenced Oct. 19 by Municipal Judge Betsy FitzGerald Rahn.

Hicks, however, was sentenced immediately after discharge of the jury, Judge Rahn placing him on probation for a year and fining him \$52.50.

During the 16 days of trial—the longest before a jury in municipal court history in this county—heard a succession of witnesses for and against Mrs. Hicks. Some praised her operation of the home for mentally retarded children, while others said some of her charges were mistreated and underfed.

Defense attorneys Thomas McBride and Ted Merrill moved immediately for a new trial, a plea which was denied by Judge Rahn.

Mrs. Hanson Fined \$525 In Home Case

WALNUT CREEK — Mrs. Eileen Hanson, who was convicted last week of mistreating mentally retarded children at her Stagg Manor boarding home in Danville, has been placed on three years probation and fined \$525.

Her son-in-law, Ronald Hicks, found guilty during the 16-day jury trial on one count of mistreatment, was placed on probation for one year and fined \$52.50.

The terms of probation, imposed yesterday by Walnut Creek Municipal Judge Betsy FitzGerald Rahn, call for Mrs. Hanson to cooperate in every way with Contra Costa County Health Officer Dr. H. L. Blum in the operation of the home.

Both Hicks and Mrs. Hanson are to comport themselves in "general good behavior."

A hearing before state authorities to determine whether Mrs. Hanson shall retain her license to operate Stagg Manor will be held Dec. 3.

Operator of School to Yield License

MARTINEZ — Mrs. Eileen M. Hanson, convicted two months ago of mistreating mentally retarded children, has agreed to surrender her license to operate the Stagg Manor boarding school in Danville.

The surprise move by her attorney, Thomas McBride of Concord, stopped a hearing on the state's demand that she forfeit her license a few minutes after it began yesterday in the Board of Supervisors' Chambers.

Deputy Atty. Gen. Jan Stevens of San Francisco said Mrs. Hanson has stipulated she will turn her license over to the State Director of Mental Hygiene by Jan. 1.